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VANGUARD

Official Newsletter of the Adjunct Faculty Association at Nassau Community College
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RETIREMENT NEWS

PAGE 7

WHAT A DIFFERENCE EDITORIAL

STARTING ON PAGE 4

THE INSIDE SCOOP

STARTING ON PAGE 2

ADJUNCT
AFA
FACULTY
ASSOCIATION

ADJUNCT AFA FACULTY ASSOCIATION

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From the President's Desk



Stefan Krompfer

After reading Richard Erben's November message, it was apparent to me that the pertinence and strength of his words needed to be upfront and prominent. Any writings of mine would be at best redundant and at worst trite. My message this month is that Rich's message is my message.

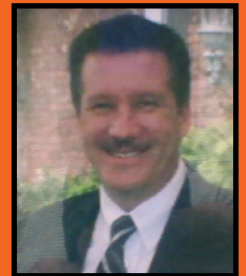
Stefan Krompfer
President
Adjunct Faculty Association

The Inside Scoop

In the not too distant past, we can recall the dire situation that the AFA was facing. Most if not all members felt that they had no input in their union; the various constituencies were at odds with one another and the spirit of collegiality and solidarity that was once the hallmark of the AFA had completely eroded. Ironically, nearly two years ago the newly elected AFA leadership inherited problems which, in large part, mirror those that NCC has been confronting over the past several years.

The strategy to restore and enhance the AFA was, and continues to be, based on age-old principles designed to empower all

constituencies to play an active and positive role in the organization. Utilizing such a strategy requires the rebuilding of trust among the constituents. The premise requires acknowledging, in a sincere fashion, the importance and self-worth of all individuals within the organization. Moreover, legitimately seeking the input of all who wish to contribute opinions and ideas, as well as the acknowledgment and at times implementation of those ideas, is vitally important. This formula resurrected the AFA to heights that it



Richard D. Erben

...continued on page 3

The Inside Scoop

has never attained in the past.

In yet another parallel, the overwhelming feeling almost two years ago was the certain doom of the AFA and many predicted its demise. At this time, NCC is facing a very similar crossroads as Middle States met for hours debating on issuing us a Show Cause order. A Show Cause order requires an institution to demonstrate to the Commission why it should not lose its accreditation and is the final step prior to the institution closing. When I was asked to serve on the Middle States Coordinating Committee (MSCC) I was deeply honored. This committee, along with its five subcommittees, is collectively known as the Institutional Response Team (IRT). Dr. Keen organized the structure of the IRT and populated each committee with a combination of faculty members and administrators. Moreover, each committee was co-chaired by a faculty member and an administrator. Throughout the process, individuals were invited to review and participate in the efforts that the IRT was making in responding to the Middle States report. Dr. Collins, Dr. Deluty and Professors Krompiew, Fris-

enda and Mazzola attended several meetings where they shared their views and offered input. I found the level of cooperation and collegial spirit most refreshing especially as we navigated very volatile topics such as shared governance.

In much the same manner that the AFA had to rebuild from the ashes, NCC now faces the same task. It is imperative that the concerns, suggestions and recommendations of all are legitimately heard. As the AFA found out early on, when active participation is engaged the outcomes are always better accepted even when they may not be universally agreed with. I can guarantee the reader that few decisions ever reached will have complete approval, but we must strive to attain acceptance. If we are to survive we, as an institution, must seek to find the common ground that we can all live with, rather than seeking the ground that we must have. If we as an institution cannot find the resolve to do so, then we will have let our students down and may very well go down in history as the authors of NCC's final chapter.

Richard D. Erben
Chief Information Officer
Adjunct Faculty Association

Editorial: What a Difference

What a difference two years have made in the AFA elections process. It's almost unfathomable.

As a candidate in the 2014 AFA officer elections, I was in attendance two years ago for the 'vote counting.' Stefan Krompfer and Scott Stark, who were likewise candidates, were also in attendance that day. We arrived separately at a hotel conference room in Nassau County, which had been rented by the AFA, to observe the Tellers Committee as they counted the vote. The three of us had been waiting, and it was already an hour past the time the vote count was due to start, when the AFA Election Chairperson arrived with the 'physical' ballot envelopes, that were stuffed into brown paper bags like groceries.

These ballots were then transferred to the Tellers Committee, who then began a painstakingly long process of certifying that each addressed envelope had indeed come from an AFA member in "good standing." This first process alone took hours. When these envelopes were finally certified, over 400 of them, they were then each manually opened to retrieve a second, smaller, sealed and unlabeled envelope from within. It was these unmarked envelopes that contained the anonymous votes for the AFA Officer election.

At the time, for those who were really interested, I was "tweeting" the events of the evening as they unfolded on Twitter.

The sun went down, and the moon came out. The opening and counting of those anonymous ballots went on for so many hours, that I had to leave in order to go teach my NCC night-class that evening. Soon after I left, Scott also had to leave to teach his evening class at NCC. This left Stefan behind to watch the vote count. Eventually, the AFA had to order pizza for dinner, as everyone, including the Tellers Committee, had to have something to eat, due to the length of time required for the process.

When my class at NCC was over, I drove back to the counting location, getting there just after 9PM. I had just missed the finalized count of the votes, I had just missed Stefan leaving, and the remaining people had begun to go home. Among the empty pizza boxes, I was able to find out the election results, and then I went home too. It had been a long day and night for everyone there. I have to praise the Tellers Committee for the long hours, and pressure, they had to endure.

The AFA went on to install several new Officers, new Department Representatives, and within a few weeks, new Executive Board members as well. All of the people elected during those Fall 2014 elections played a part in the many changes which



Paul Guadagnino

...continued on page 5

Editorial: What a Difference

have come to affect how the AFA functions today, including revisions to its Constitution, Bylaws and election processes.

Here we are now, two years later, and I once again threw my hat in the ring for the Fall 2016 elections. Right off the bat, things were different this time around. To begin with, everyone in the AFA was emailed an "Adjunct Profile" on September 24th, which informed them of their status in regards to the election. Those in the AFA were informed by that profile email as to whether they were members of the electorate, and had sufficient time to question that status if need be. Next, clear email announcements were sent out signaling the start of the elections to all in the AFA, including the directions and rules for running, which was followed up with the same announcements being published in the *Vanguard*. Similar to the previous 2014 elections, everyone who was running this October was invited to the election results meeting. The difference was that this time, we were told the location and date of the results meeting ahead of time via email. Another difference: for this election the AFA

was combining the results meeting of the Officer elections with that of the Department Representative elections! If that had happened in 2014, we'd have been at the hotel overnight!

Another amazing difference was that instead of having to wait over a week for physically mailed envelopes, this election's results meeting was set for a day after the end of voting: Tuesday, November 1st, at 7:00PM. Gone was the 8-hour-long counting process. Gone too was the rented hotel conference room, and the pizza. This time around, those running in the elections were invited to the newly renovated AFA Conference Room on campus, where a projection screen and computer were already set up. At exactly the stated start time, the Chief Information Officer, Richard Erben, took a minute to explain the process to those in attendance, including an explanation of who on the Election Committee administered the different elections. Finally, he explained about how Electionbuddy.com was used as our online voting mechanism. It was so silent when Rich finished talking that you could have

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...continued on page 6

...continued from page 5

Editorial: What a Difference

heard a pin drop. Then, on the brightly illuminated screen, Rich logged into Electionbuddy right in front of our eyes, and we all saw the results together at the same time. With each click of the mouse, Rich carefully read the unveiled results for each contested election, one at a time, starting with the Officer elections and then moving to the Department Representative elections. Rich described accurately, in a slow and steady voice, who had won each contest and the vote count amounts. The whole process took less than 20 minutes.

Once finished, Rich explained to those of us in the room that the Officer and Department Representative results would still need to be certified by the AFA Executive Board, at their next meeting, and that the new terms of office began January 1st, 2017. Within 24 hours, the AFA emailed each of us who were in a contested election a hyperlink, whether we were in attendance of the results meeting or not, so that we could see the results of the elections we were involved in. Shortly thereafter, the AFA emailed out the results of the Officer election to the entire AFA via email, and

then the individual results of contested Department elections to each Department. We are talking about an unbelievable difference in speed and accuracy.

Once the AFA Executive Board certified the results on Saturday, November 12th, the AFA published the November Special Election Edition *Vanguard* which featured the clear results of the election without opinions or editorials. Just the facts, as they used to say.

When all the incongruities between the 2014 and 2016 elections are compared, I am wholly taken aback by how vastly different these two elections were organized, run, and executed. The current AFA Election Committee, especially its Chairperson Rosemarie Tavitian, should be commended on a job well done. Being able to observe these events firsthand has allowed me a viewpoint few have seen up close: A union updating its democratic processes so that they, and it, can be taken seriously.

Paul Guadagnino
Editor
Adjunct Faculty Association

NYSTRS & NYSEERS Retirement News

Attention: New Hires

During the hiring process you should have received a document entitled:
Notification of Rights Regarding Retirement System Membership for Part Time Employees.

If you did not receive this document, please contact Human Resources at
(516) 572-7759.

Please feel free to contact me regarding this or other retirement issues: (516) 541-0594

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Dear Colleagues,

For those of you who attended last year's AFA holiday party, you will recall what a festive event it was. We also had a very large turnout throughout the day with individuals coming and going. In order to have an adequate amount of food and drinks available, I am asking that you RSVP if you plan on joining us at the party. The invitation is below. Please RSVP to afarsvp@aol.com

Thank you,
Rich Erben



Member Recruitment

The AFA wants you! Please consider joining with a thousand of your colleagues in becoming an AFA member by visiting our website at: <http://www.myafaonline.org/#!/membership-application/o4b1h>